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In-depth evaluation of the population programme

Note by the Secretary-General

In conformity with General Assembly resolutions 48/218 B of 29 July 1994 and 54/244 of 23 December 1999, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit herewith the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the in-depth evaluation of the population programme. The Secretary-General takes note of its findings and concurs with its recommendations.

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Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the in-depth evaluation of the population programme

Summary

The present report by the Central Evaluation Unit reviews the achievements and shortcomings of the United Nations population programme, which is implemented both by the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and by the regional commissions. It covers the following activities: (a) servicing of intergovernmental bodies; (b) monitoring of population trends and policies; (c) analysis and projections of demographic data; (d) dissemination; (e) coordination; and (f) technical cooperation.

The work of the Population Division is an important part of the world professional discussion on demographic issues. The value of the Division's reports and publications as reference work, and their comprehensiveness and technical quality, is well recognized. The Division has made a significant contribution to the understanding of international migration. The Population Information Network (POPIN) has been a notable success. Recommendations are made on the following: (a) improving the coverage of information on population activities presented to the Commission on Population and Development through consideration of a proposal for an integrated presentation; (b) enhancing the quality and usefulness of the Division's output through clarification of statements on methodology and assumptions and more interpretation of results; (c) enhancing distribution of print publications through the Internet, particularly for publications with little commercial significance; (d) ensuring the future of POPIN through the energetic seeking of funds both from regular and extrabudgetary sources; (e) increasing research funding on population issues by submitting proposals to the United Nations Population Fund, foundations and other sources; (f) ensuring interdisciplinary approaches to population issues to foster collaboration between the Division and other units within the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and other programmes and agencies; (g) providing for the assessment of the restructuring in the regional commissions to be part of the triennial review of the population programme; (h) more active exchange of experience dealing with products on population issues among staff in the regional commissions; (i) promoting more extrabudgetary funding for regional commissions; and (j) providing for review by the Commission on Population and Development.

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I. Introduction

1. At its thirty-eighth session, the Committee for Programme and Coordination recommended that the population programme be the subject of an in-depth evaluation, and that a report be presented to the Committee at its forty-first session.[1] The evaluation conducted by the Central Evaluation Unit of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) focused on the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs at Headquarters and work on population by the regional commissions; it covers the period from 1992 to 2000, that is, the span of the two medium-term plans, for the periods 1992-1997 and 1998-2001.

2. Standard procedures for the in-depth evaluation were followed: (a) initial consultations with the departments and offices involved; (b) collection of United Nations documents and reports, and other existing assessments; and (c) structured interviews and consultations with staff members of the Population Division and the regional commissions and other United Nations programmes involved in population activities, former members of the Bureau of the Commission on Population and Development and staff of institutes and academic institutions. Systematic reviews of professional indexes, searches of the Nexis database and searches of various web sites were also undertaken.

II. Institutional arrangements

A. Intergovernmental oversight

Commission on Population and Development

3. Following the International Conference on Population and Development, held at Cairo in September 1994, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council decided: (a) the Population Commission would be renamed the Commission on Population and Development to reflect the new approach embodied in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development;[2] (b) the Commission would meet annually; and (c) it would monitor, review and assess the implementation of the goals of the International Conference on Population and Development, and its membership would be increased from 27 to 47 (General Assembly resolutions 49/128 and 50/124 and Economic and Social Council resolutions 1995/209 and 1995/320). At its twenty-eighth session, in 1995, the Commission recommended that the Population Division, in response to the Programme of Action, should reassess its priorities and internal organization but continue to perform its traditional work "on basic population trends, on the evolution of population policies, on understanding links between population and development and on the crucial underpinning of population estimates and projections".[3] At its June 1999 inter-sessional meeting, the Bureau of the Commission recommended that the Director of the Population Division ensure the recruitment and retention of the highest calibre Professional staff to undertake the increasingly complex research requested of the Population Division.

4. At the 1999 session of the Commission, 40 per cent of the heads of delegations were from technical departments or ministries of their Governments and from that group half occupied senior positions at the ministerial or director level. With such representation, the work of the Commission can be conducted with a technical appreciation of diverse national practices.

5. Representatives of the regional commissions, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and specialized agencies attend the annual meetings of the Commission. UNFPA prepares annual reports to the Commission on the operational implementation of the Programme of Action and on the flow of financial resources for assisting in the implementation of the Programme of Action. However, the Commission does not have as part of its documentation an integrated report on all the population activities in the United Nations system.

Regional review bodies

6. As a result of various restructuring efforts that took place in the regional commissions, the population programme activities have been merged with other programmes dealing with socio-economic development in all the commissions except the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) (see para. 11 below). Intergovernmental oversight is provided by the following bodies: in ECLAC, the Ad Hoc Committee on Population and Development; in the Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the Committee on Socio-economic Measures to Alleviate Poverty in Rural and

Urban Areas; in the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the Committee on Social Development; in the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the Committee on Sustainable Development and the Follow-up Committee on the Implementation of the Dakar/Ngor Declaration and Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development; and in the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), the Conference of European Statisticians.

Intergovernmental review of UNFPA

7. UNFPA reports to the Executive Board of the United Nations Population Fund/United Nations Development Programme.

B. Secretariat arrangements

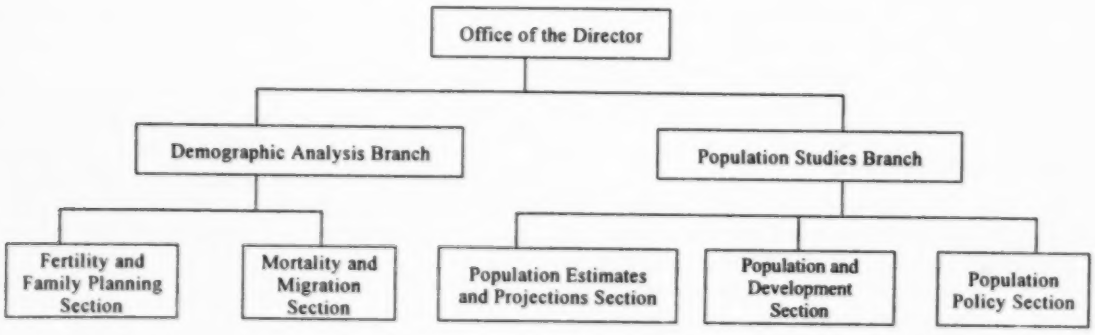
Population Division

8. The core functions of the Population Division for the period reviewed are described in the medium-term plans for the periods 1992-1997 and 1998-2001; the four proposed programme budgets for the bienniums 1994-1995, 1996-1997, 1998-1999 and 2000-2001; and the Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/1997/9. The objectives and strategy for the immediate future are contained in the medium term plan for the period 2002-2005.[4] Since the purpose of the evaluation is to provide recommendations for the future, the report is organized in accordance with the programme strategy set out in that document. The components of the strategy and the corresponding sections of the evaluation are indicated below:

> "(a) Provision of substantive support to the Commission on Population and Development [III A.1];
>
> "(b) Provision of assistance in the ongoing review, monitoring and assessment of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development in achieving the key actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action and in its second quinquennial review and appraisal [III A.2];
>
> "(c) Preparation of official United Nations population estimates and projections, including age and sex patterns in mortality and fertility data, for all countries and areas of the world, as well as the official United Nations estimates and projections of urban and rural areas and major cities [III B];
>
> "(d) Effective dissemination of worldwide population information, via the Internet, including through the Population Information Network (POPIN) and other means." [III C].[4]

The Division, which includes two branches and five sections, has allocated to it 26 Professional and 17 General Service posts (see table 1 below). The large increase in the workload for supporting the Commission resulting from the 1994 reforms (see para. 3 above) was absorbed with no increase in resources.

Table 1
Organizational table of the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs



Statistics Division

9. The Statistics Division compiles statistical demographic data based on national census, civil registration and household surveys. Since its early years, the United Nations has issued a series of international recommendations on population and housing censuses to assist countries in planning and carrying out cost-effective censuses. These recommendations, which are endorsed by the Statistical Commission, provide general guidance to national Governments on the main characteristics of population and housing censuses, census operations and methods and detailed guidance on the content of censuses. The Statistics Division has over the years issued a series of handbooks and technical reports to assist countries in carrying out population and housing censuses. These handbooks and reports have been reviewed from time to time to reflect new developments and emerging issues in census taking. The most recent series have been issued to assist countries in their preparation for the year 2000 and future rounds of censuses. Since 1948, the *Demographic Yearbook* has been a major regular publication of the Statistics Division. The 1998 *Demographic Yearbook* is now being edited and will be published in 2001. UNFPA has provided funds to the Statistics Division in support of technical assistance to countries in the area of population censuses. The Central Evaluation Unit was informed that the financing by UNFPA would be phased out by the end of 2001.

10. The Population Division uses demographic statistics collected by the Statistics Division in the preparation of population estimates and detailed demographic and socio-economic analyses. The Population Division has collaborated with the Statistics Division in the preparation of manuals for data collection. It also takes part in the planning of issues to be covered in the *Demographic Yearbook*. The Statistics Division has provided contributions to the semi-annual *Population Newsletter* and the annual report *World Population Monitoring*.

Regional commissions

11. With the exception of ECLAC, where the population programme is executed by the Population Division/Latin American Demographic Centre (CELADE), the units of the regional commissions conducting population activities are integrated into broader programmes focusing on socio-economic development. In ESCAP, population activities are the responsibility of the Population and Rural and Urban Development Division; in ECA, of the Food Security and Sustainable Development Division; in ESCWA, of the Social Development Issues and Policies Division; in ECE, of the Economic Analysis Division.

United Nations Population Fund

12. The UNFPA mandate is to extend assistance to developing countries, countries with economies in transition, and other countries at their request, to help them address population and development issues, including reproductive and sexual health. UNFPA is the lead organization of the United Nations system for the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, particularly in assisting countries to take the strategic action necessary to ensure the availability of reproductive health services and a choice of reproductive health products, including contraceptives, as urged by the General Assembly in the key actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action.

13. The UNFPA technical advisory programme helps countries build capacity so that they can achieve the objectives and goals of the Programme of Action. It consists of an inter-agency arrangement through which technical assistance is provided to countries in the thematic areas of reproductive health, population and development strategies and advocacy, with gender as an important cross-cutting dimension in each of these areas. The technical advisory programme currently consists of a network of nine regional/subregional country technical services teams made up of technical specialists coming from different United Nations organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), together with specialists services provided mainly from the headquarters of United Nations organizations.

14. The UNFPA interregional programme includes the following components: (a) reproductive health; (b) population and development strategies; (c) advocacy through the production, distribution and dissemination of publications, computer software and audiovisual materials; and (d) gender issues.

Specialized agencies of the United Nations system

15. United Nations agencies use the projected population figures of the Population Division in formulating their own specific estimates and projections. The Division collaborates closely with United Nations funds and agencies. For example, the Division has participated in meetings organized by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to review estimates of maternal mortality, and in meetings on reproductive health indicators organized by WHO. The Division is also a member of the WHO Special Panel for Social Science Research on Reproductive Health. The Division has received funding from and collaborated with UNICEF in studies on child mortality. WHO, UNICEF, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Joint United Nations Programme on Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS) (UNAIDS) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) have prepared contributions on various topics to the *World Population Monitoring* reports. WHO transmits to the Population Division mortality data submitted by Member States which serve as a source of information for the mortality estimates used in the formulation of population estimates and projections.

International Organization for Migration

16. The International Organization for Migration (IOM), whose membership includes 79 countries, has held observer status in the General Assembly since 1992. To advance the understanding of migration mechanisms and seek practical solutions of migration, IOM organizes seminars and facilitates consultations among Governments that face similar migration situations. The Population Division and IOM are frequent collaborators. IOM depends on the Division for the statistical aspects, definitions and conceptual frameworks of migration.

Non-governmental organizations

17. The International Conference on Population and Development generated considerable interest among national and local NGOs from around the world. NGOs became involved during the conference preparatory process as well as during the plenary sessions and the adoption of the final text. Chapter 15 of the Programme of Action[2] recognized the important role of NGOs in implementing the Programme of Action. Experts from research and academic institutions in the field of demographic studies are frequently invited to participate in expert and technical group meetings.

C. Funding

Population Division

18. There was a small decline in regular budget resources during the biennium 1994-1995 and a sharp decline in extrabudgetary resources from UNFPA during 1992-2000 (see table 2). The decline in UNFPA contributions to the Division can be attributed to two main factors: first, following 1995 with few exceptions, donor nations have reduced their support of population measures; and second, UNFPA priorities and orientations have changed to a greater emphasis on field activities and national capacity-building.

Regional commissions

19. From 1992 to 2000, ECLAC experienced a decrease in its regular budget resources. However, it managed to maintain the same level of Professional and higher category posts (one Director and five Professionals) supported by the regular budget. ESCAP reported that following a reorganization in 1998, the level of regular budget Professional staff resources allocated to population-specific activities had remained the same (three Professional posts), while the area of responsibility of the Director and the administrative officer were widened. ECE reported that the number of staff supported from regular-budget sources (two Professional posts) had remained stable while those supported from extrabudgetary funds had decreased between 1992-1993 and 2000-2001 owing to the decline in the UNFPA contribution (see table 3). ESCWA reported that the level of staff resources allocated to population activities had remained stable at four Professional posts over the past two bienniums. Based on the ECA estimate that 20 per cent of the regular budget resources of the Food Security and Sustainable Development Division were allocated to population activities in 1998-1999 and 2000, it was estimated that ECA regular budget expenditures related to population had declined by one third between 1992-1993 and 1998-1999. With respect to extrabudgetary resources, all of the regional commissions reported a decline over past bienniums. Based on figures provided

Table 2
Department of Economic and Social Affairs resources devoted to population activities, 1992-2001

(Thousands of United States dollars)

	Biennial expenditures				
Category	*1992-1993*	*1994-1995*	*1996-1997*	*1998-1999*	*2000-2001*
Regular budget	7 316.7	6 845.9	7 041.9	7 392.6	8 671.4[a]
Technical assistance					
(a) Section 21 (regular budget)	N/A	247.90	174.4	406.3	491.4
(b) Extrabudgetary resources[b]	14 632.2[c]	9 185.0[c]	1 938.0[c]	1 385.5[d]	368.0[e]
Total	**21 948.9**	**16 278.8**	**9 154.3**	**9 184.4**	**9 530.8**

Source: Official budget documents and financial data provided by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs Executive Office.

[a] Revised appropriations.

[b] Includes both trust funds' substantive activities and funds for operational projects.

[c] Extrabudgetary expenditures on population activities executed by the Population Division/Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis, and Department of Technical Cooperation for Development/Department for Development Support and Management Services.

[d] Extrabudgetary expenditures for population activities executed by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

[e] Includes $178,000 actual expenditures for 2000 and appropriation of $190,000 for 2001.

Table 3
Resources of the regional commissions devoted to population activities

(Thousands of United States dollars)

	Biennial expenditures		
Resources	*1992-1993*	*1998-1999*	*2000[a]*
ECA			
Regular budget	1 639.6	1 104.0	484.0
UNFPA	5 811.6	3 812.0	1 639.0
Other extrabudgetary	-	-	-
Total	**7 351.2**	**4 916.0**	**2 131.0**
ECE			
Regular budget	597.0	582.0	277.0
UNFPA	1 286.0	823.0	233.0
Other extrabudgetary	11.0	206.0	34.0
Total	**1 894.0**	**1 611.0**	**544.0**

Resources	Biennial expenditures		
	1992-1993	1998-1999	2000[a]
ECLAC			
Regular budget	2 471.0	2 170.6	768.3
UNFPA	3 958.3	1 067.6	718.6
Other extrabudgetary	1 731.3	430.7	501.6
Total	**8 160.6**	**3 668.9**	**1 988.5**
ESCAP			
Regular budget	1 277.4	1 280.5	590.2
UNFPA	3 904.7	3 627.0	596.5
Other extrabudgetary	320.6	204.1	75.2
Total	**5 502.7**	**5 111.6**	**1 261.9**
ESCWA			
Regular budget	1 479.7	846.3	461.9
UNFPA	800.0	1 090.0	469.5
Other extrabudgetary	49.5	-	-
Total	**2 329.2**	**1 936.3**	**931.4**

Source: Financial statements, proposed programme budgets and revised appropriations for 2000 and internal records.

[a] Revised appropriation.

by ECLAC, the UNFPA contribution declined from $3.9 million in 1992-1993 to $1 million in 1998-1999.

UNFPA

20. Based on figures provided in the 1995 and 1999 annual reports, UNFPA total expenditures were $281 million in 1999, compared with $310 million in 1995 (a decline of 9.35 per cent) while expenditures on country, regional and interregional activities were $187.2 million in 1999, compared with $230.6 million in 1995 (a decline of 18.6 per cent). The Fund's resource allocation system gives special attention to least developed countries, low income countries and Africa (1998 UNFPA annual report, appendix E, Board decision 98/24).

III. Assessments of the work of the Population Division

A. Servicing the Commission on Population and Development

21. Eight members of past and present bureaux of the Commission responded to the questionnaire of the Central Evaluation Unit requesting their assessments of the work of the Population Division. Seven members rated the substantive support provided by the Division in facilitating the intergovernmental process and in preparing documentation as "very useful"; one member characterized the nature of that support as "excellent". Among the suggestions offered was that the Division should have more consultation with demographic experts attending the Commission as delegates.

B. Monitoring of population trends and policies

22. In paragraph 16.25 of the Programme of Action,[2] the International Conference on Population and Development calls upon the General Assembly regularly to review its implementation, while the Economic and Social Council is asked to provide system-wide coordination in monitoring implementation and to review the United Nations reporting system. At its twenty-eighth session, in March 1995, the Commission on Population and Development proposed to the Council the following thematic, multi-year programme of work to monitor achievement of the Conference objectives: for 1996, reproductive rights and reproductive health; for 1997, international migration; for 1998 health and mortality; for 1999, population growth structure and distribution; for 2000, gender and development. The Population Division informs the debates of the Commission through the issuance of a *World Population Monitoring* report on each of the themes. A review in a professional journal stated that the 1997 *World Population Monitoring*[5] report on issues of international migration and development "is likely to remain for years the most enlightening and comprehensive source of information on its ... subject".[6]

23. Six of the bureau members who responded to the Central Evaluation Unit survey gave a "positive" rating to the Population Division reports on world population trends. A 1997 review of United Nations social flagship reports conducted by the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) estimated that production of the *World Population Monitoring* report takes about one fourth of total staff time and involves most of the 26 Professional staff members of the Population Division. While recognizing the comprehensiveness, quality, high level of technical competence of the report, UNRISD recommended that the Division explore introducing changes in the layout and format to make it more "reader friendly" and accessible to a wider audience. It also recommended that the Division request an exemption from the requirement of official United Nations editing for the report, and that efforts continue to make a larger proportion of the report and its statistical tables available over the Internet. The Population Division is in the process of implementing those recommendations.

24. At a special session, held from 30 June to 2 July 1999, the General Assembly reviewed the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development. Technical support during the preparatory process was provided jointly by the Population Division and UNFPA. UNFPA was responsible for preparing the draft report that served as a basis for the negotiations (E/CN.9/1999/PC/4) as well as the report of the operational review and appraisal of the Programme of Action (E/CN.9/1999/PC/3). The Division prepared the report of the Secretary-General on the review and appraisal of the progress made in achieving the goals and objectives of the Programme of Action of ICPD (E/CN.9/1999/PC/2). In his report on the special session, the Secretary-General noted that "the review and appraisal process and the special session were characterized by broad United Nations system-wide participation and the involvement of a wide range of civil society organizations. In particular, there was close collaboration between the Population Division of the Department of Economics and Social Affairs and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)" (A/54/442, para. 5).

C. Analytical work of the Population Division

1. Views of members of the Commission

25. Of the eight members of the Bureau who responded to a survey, six gave a positive rating to the reports on population trends and policies and on identification of emerging issues; expert group meetings and seminars and workshops; five gave a positive rating to reports on estimates and projections; and four gave a positive rating to technical manuals and wall charts. Suggestions to improve the work of the Division included: enhancing research on interrelationships between population and socio-economic development and the environment; transferring knowledge to policy makers through seminars; providing more support for regional database improvements and small-scale research in population development in order to make long-term estimates more accurate; undertaking more analysis of the working age population and employment, the consequences of low fertility and the impact of ageing on operational aspects of the economy and society; and

presenting demographic information in a less technical form.

2. Views of the United Nations Population Fund and the specialized agencies

26. The following views are responses to a Central Evaluation Unit survey on the usefulness of the outputs and services of the Population Division.

27. UNFPA reported that, for two of its own divisions that were regular users, the level of satisfaction was medium for the Division's estimates and projections, monitoring trends and policies, technical manuals, wall charts, international conferences, expert group meetings, seminars and workshops but lower with respect to identification of emerging issues. UNFPA commented that the Division's data were often out of date by the time they were released and suggested that (a) to make the Division's estimates and projections more useful and relevant they should be prepared on a rolling basis and posted on the Division's web site; (b) "more credence should be given by the Division to countries' own data"; and (c) the Division should be more "proactive in identifying emerging issues and their operational implications".

28. WHO reported that, for the three of its departments/clusters that were regular users, the level of satisfaction was high for the Division's estimates and projections, manuals, wall charts, and identification of emerging issues, and medium with respect to international conferences, expert group meetings, seminars and workshops and reports on world population trends. WHO suggested in its response that the Division's findings and conclusions could be strengthened with respect to the issues addressed by the specialized agencies.

29. The World Bank reported that the three different groups using the Division's output rated their level of satisfaction as high. The Bank suggested that "reports on world population trends and policies would be strengthened and be more relevant if publications were issued more promptly"; demographic estimates should be strengthened by reflecting to a greater extent "reliable country estimates" soon after they become available; revisions for a particular country should be immediately posted on the Division's web site in order to mitigate the delays involved in the print publication of the revisions of estimates and projections.

30. FAO reported that for the two groups within FAO that were regular users, the level of satisfaction was high for the Division's estimates and projections; world population trends and policies, technical manuals; data bases and software; and provision of advisory services. The level of satisfaction was lower for the following outputs: identification of emerging issues, international conferences, expert group meetings, training workshops, and wall charts. It suggested that the urban and rural projections be disaggregated by sex and age.

31. ILO reported that two groups within ILO were using (a) the Division's reports on world trends and policies; (b) its reports on estimates and projections; and (c) its international conferences, expert group meetings and training workshops. The level of satisfaction was high for the first two outputs and medium for the third.

3. Expert assessments and reviews of publications

32. Professional journals in the field of population studies contained over 20 reviews of the work of the Population Division. Most of the reviews praised the high professional standards and the usefulness of the publications to professionals in the field of population.

Analysis of demographic variables at the world level

33. Two sections within the Population Division are responsible for implementation of the analysis of demographic variables at the world level: the Fertility and Family Planning Section and the Mortality and Migration Section. They produce reports, including those based on expert group meetings and symposia, wall charts, databases and manuals providing analyses of demographic variables and the world level. Nine reviews related to this programme element were found.

34. A review of the report on an Expert Group Meeting on "International Migration Policies and the Status of Female Migrants"[7] commented that "It is a welcome addition to this expanding body of literature. The papers included are well chosen .... These studies represent extensive and detailed research on overall issues as well as on specific populations .... The volume includes an extensive table of contents, but the lack of an index impairs access to the text and statistical data".[8]

35. The Population Division made a significant contribution to the debate on international migration

through the issuance on 21 March 2000 (in English only, as a working paper, and on the Division's web site (www.un.org/esa/population/migration.htm)) of the report, entitled "Replacement Migration: Is it a Solution to Declining and Ageing Populations?" (ESA/P/WP.160). Over 120 articles on the report appeared during the period from November 1999 to June 2000 in newspapers in Europe, the United States of America and Japan. A member of the Centre Nationale de Recherches Sociales wrote "Before, immigration had a negative image; linked to the invasion syndrome, it was considered as a social and economic cost; here its cultural and economic benefits are recognized".[9] Other newspaper articles welcomed the United Nations contribution in highlighting the problem of population ageing in developed countries and in opening the policy debate on this issue.

36. While recognizing the importance of the issue, the representative of the European Union stated at the thirty-third session of the Commission, in March 2000, that "the document should have been presented to this Commission before being presented to the press and the public", and that the report "presents a one dimensional approach to the highly complex issues of population ageing". It suggested that "the matter requires a thorough methodological analysis".

37. A review in a professional journal stated that the draft report on replacement migration had captured the attention and raised the eyebrows of international audiences but that many demographers had taken exception to the recommendations. The reviewer quoted David Coleman, reader in demography at the University of Oxford, as commenting on the "excessive reliance by the Division on narrow demographic statistics relating to the number of people, without regard to their characteristics and without regard to consequences of such population changes on social and political structures, community relations, or social cohesion".[10]

38. In September 2000, the Population Division participated in a seminar serving as preparatory session to a meeting of the Ministers of Justice and Home Affairs of the European Communities. In November 2000, the same group of Ministers adopted a communication on the European Community immigration policy, which referred to the contribution of the Population Division as follows:

> "A recent report by the United Nations, purely on demographic considerations, suggested that replacement migration could be an important factor in solving the problems caused by the declining and ageing populations in Europe. The Commission believes that, while increased legal immigration in itself cannot be considered in the long term as an effective way to offset demographic changes, since migrants, once settled, tend to adopt the fertility patterns of the host country, it could in the short term be an important element in the population growth which could accompany other responses to demographic changes, such as more friendly family policies ..."[11]

39. Reviewers praised some of the other special studies issued under this programme element as valuable reference works, while at the same time noting weaknesses. For example, *Too Young to Die: Genes or Gender*[12] was assessed to be a "fine reference book for researchers in the topic and more broadly, in the issues of child health and mortality in developing countries".[13] However, the reviewer found "the more general chapter on malnutrition to be the weakest in the book".[13]

40. With respect to *AIDS and the Demography of Africa*,[14] a reviewer stated that "this volume describes the United Nations new and welcome effort to include the effects of AIDS mortality explicitly in its 1992 assessment of population prospect ... [it] could have benefited from a more thorough description of the AIDS component of the projections methodology than is permitted by the few paragraphs actually devoted to that subject. A fuller account of the assumptions and input variables would have allowed readers to make their own judgements of validity of what on the whole appear to be plausible projections".[15]

World population estimates and projections

41. Work on world population estimates and projections is the responsibility of the Population Estimates and Projections Section of the Population Studies Branch in the Population Division. Specific outputs include multi-volume reports on estimates and projections, which are revised biennially and issued both in report form and as electronic databases, which are marketed as sales items; technical meetings; wall charts; and customized products in response to specific requests.

42. Concerning the issue of timeliness, the Population Division is several months late in issuing its *World Population Prospects: the 2000 revision*. The unusual delay was attributed to several vacancies, which were filled only six months ago.

43. In 1998, the United States National Research Council examined the projections of various agencies, including those of the Population Division and the World Bank, to assess their assumptions, estimate their accuracy and uncertainty and provide guidance to improve existing forecasts. The Council's Panel on Population Projections issued its report in 2000, entitled *Beyond Six billion, Forecasting the World's Population/Panel on Population Projections, Committee on Population, Commission on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education*.[16] The Panel's major conclusions regarding the United Nations projections were that "these current world population projections to 2050 are based on reasonable assumptions and provide plausible forecasts of world demographic trends for the next few decades. The relatively small global errors made in past projections are consistent with this conclusion". The report made the following recommendations for improvements in current projection methodology: (a) refine the simplifying assumptions that projections typically make about future trends in fertility, mortality and migration; (b) use more reliable baseline data (this requires further investments in censuses, surveys and vital registration; (c) update projections quickly as new information on current demographic trends become available; (d) present more clearly the underlying methodology and assumptions; and (e) conduct various types of population research to make forecasts more accurate. Examples of research projects suggested by the Panel included: more research on trends in the components of population change and their determinants and their statistical modelling; research, interdisciplinary when necessary, on the reasons for low fertility levels, on patterns and causes of birth delay and the nature and causes of gains in life expectancy, especially at older ages; and extending the analysis of uncertainty.

44. A search of reviews of United Nations publications in the area of projections found seven articles. Most were published in *Population and Development Review*, one of the most important professional journals in the field of population. Generally, the reviews were very positive.

45. A review of the *World Population Prospects: 1998*[17] stated that the "series is the standard, indispensable source of comprehensive, world, regional and national demographic data in a comparative format".[18] A review article concluded that "the 12 sets of population projections that the United Nations prepared between the 1950s and the end of the 1980s show a clear tendency over time towards greater accuracy, and there is no reason to believe that projections made by others would do substantially better. Part of the accuracy improvement is attributable to better data for base populations ... Not only the base population, but also implied growth rate have become more accurate."[19]

46. In a book entitled *Resources and Population*, the editors, referring to the Population Division's estimates for total population size, state that "Locally relevant margins of error may persist, but the global figures appear to be a satisfactory approximation to reality. Progress in methodological tools of analysis has aided in deriving coherent estimates in cases where available data are lacking or of poor quality".[20] With respect to projections of future population and its characteristics, the review stated that "their reliability has improved over time particularly for regions of Africa where few data were available until recently".

47. Another review, referring to the Population Division's 1998 projections, concludes: "future fertility declines are dependent on access to family planning services .... The United Nations projections assume that fertility rates will continue to decline, but millions of poor women still don't have access to family planning services ... the information or the freedom needed to make decisions on family size".[21]

48. A review of the *World Urbanization Prospects: the 1996 revision*[22] stated:

> "that it is the most widely used source of urban population statistics ... [it] offers for the first time in 20 years ... a description of the methodology used by the United Nations to estimate and project urban population and agglomeration ... previous issues of the series provided insufficient text to describe a vast body of data, [and] the latest revision is exceptionally skimpy in its discussion of urban population trends and is devoid of interpretation .... The one significant change from the methods developed in the 1970s ... is the imposition of an unspecified

'dampening factor' to cities in countries where the aggregate of city population is projected to grow more rapidly than the national urban population. One hopes that this procedure helps avoid some of the more egregious errors that have plagued the United Nations short term city population in the past — for instance, the forecast in 1980 that Mexico City's population would by now exceed 30 million, as compared to the current estimates of about 18 million. Yet implausible projections of future city size remain ...."[23]

Population policy and socio-economic development

49. Two sections within the Population Studies Branch, the Population and Development Section and the Population and Policy Section, are responsible for these programme elements. Two reviews found by the Central Evaluation Unit for this subprogramme pertained to population policies, and one to the work on population and development.

50. *The Challenge of Urbanization: The world's large cities, 1995*,[24] received the following very favourable review:

"This book was the first study of its kind: a systematic review of historical, current and anticipated conditions facing planners in 100 cities, in both industrialized and developing countries. Individual city profiles provide a wealth of descriptive information and numerical data, in a consistent and concise format .... This is no small contribution given the dearth of reliable, timely data on cities in low income countries, and the dispersed, often inaccessible, sources from which such data derive. While the alphabetical sequence of the cities discussed is not conducive to comparative interpretation by the reader, and the authors offer only a three page introduction to summarize the diverse experience of cities, this book should prove valuable to persons interested in problems that confront particular cities."[25]

51. A review of *National Population Policies*[26] stated that "though the content might be obscure for most undergraduates, this is nonetheless a valuable compilation of several documents and data sets".[27] More critically, it noted that policy indicators tend to be simplistic; for example, distribution policies are reported "yes" or "no". Similarly, contraception policies are indicated as either indirect, direct, limited or "no support".

52. A review of *Population, Environment and Development: Proceedings of the United Nations Expert Group Meeting, 1992*[28] states that the book "documents an important attempt by the United Nations to elevate population and environmental linkage to a new level of focus, research and debate. ... Perceived audience and purpose of the various works are inconsistent, and therefore the book does not form a coherent whole. Nonetheless, there are a number of excellent papers in the volume that must be highlighted for their contribution to the debate ... the book provides an accurate snapshot of the state of knowledge and level of debate in 1992".[29]

53. Since 1992, the Population and Development Section has produced several publications, including reports of working groups, but none of these activities appear to have elicited responses in professional literature.

4. Indicators of professional use

54. One indicator of the use of United Nations technical publications by professionals is their presence in specialized indexes. This indicator can be measured by the ratio of citations of United Nations publications to total citations for any given topic. In the case of the population programme, an Internet search of the *Population Index* (popindex.princeton.edu) was conducted. The *Population Index*, published by the Office of Population Research at Princeton University was, until it was discontinued at the end of 1999, a primary reference tool for researchers on population issues. The Central Evaluation Unit found that "United Nations" as author receives the highest proportion of citations in the following demographic topics: population meetings and conferences, population projections and policies. Within the "United Nations as author" category, the Population Division is cited with greater frequency than any other United Nations body within the United Nations system and receives the highest proportion of citations (about half) in the fields of family planning, mortality and migration; one third of all citations on population projections are attributed to the Population Division. Two senior staff members were cited a total of 20 times as individual authors. This analysis reinforces the evidence of reviews in the

professional literature quoted above that the work of the Population Division is an important part of the world professional discussion on demographic issues.

5. Indicators of the use by the media

55. An indicator of the visibility of the programme is the interest of the media in information provided by the United Nations on population issues. A search of the Nexis electronic database containing wire service stories of news agencies worldwide revealed that from 1994 to June 2000 the United Nations was referred to in a very high proportion of stories on population issues: for population estimates and projections, 64.7 per cent of total stories; for fertility and family planning, 44.6 per cent; for population policies, 42.5 per cent; and for international migration, 35.6 per cent. Using 1994 as a baseline for this indicator, it is clear that the number of wire stories in 1998, 1999 and 2000 depended on whether an international population conference took place that year.

D. Dissemination

1. Strategies for disseminating print publications

56. The dissemination strategy of the Population Division for print publications is very strongly oriented towards free distribution. Stocks put aside for sales are small; aside from the *World Population Prospects*, whose 1998 edition generated $60,000 in revenues, the Division does not appear to have other print publications of commercial significance. In addition to print publications, the Division makes available for sale, upon request, its databases and software in the form of magnetic tapes and diskettes. The Division reported earning approximately $20,000 per year from the sales of population databases.

Table 4
Free distribution and sales of United Nations publications on population (1994-1999)

	Free distribution			
Title of publication and sales number	*Print run (all languages)*	*Official list (including stocks)*	*Stock for distribution by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs*	*Sales as of October 2000 (and initial stocks)*
World Population Prospects, vol. I, 99.XIII.9	6 925	1 075	5 000	488 (850)
World Population Prospects, vol. II, 99.XIII.8	6 925	1 075	5 000	433 (850)
World Population Monitoring, 99.XIII.14	6 655	1 105	5 000	169 (550)
Health and Mortality. A Concise Report, 99.XIII.2	11 360	1 845	8 500	353 (1 015)
International Migration Policies, 98.XIII.8	6 680	1 180	5 000	454 (500)
National Population Policies, 99.XIII.3	5 450	1 200	3 500	415 (750)
Too Young To Die, 98.XIII.13	6 825	1 175	5 000	456 (650)
AIDS and the Demography of Africa, 94.XIII.11	5 475	1 325	3 500	542 (650)
Population Bulletin of the United Nations, 99.XIII.13	6 505	1 105	5 000	208 (400)
Comparator				
Demographic Yearbook[a] (vol. 49), 99.XIII.1	5 630	1 080	1 000	2 745 (3 550)

Source: Information provided by the Documents Control Section, Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services, and the Sales and Marketing Section, Department of Public Information. Numbers include all languages.

[a] The Statistics Division is the author office.

57. The official mailing list maintained by the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services contains 1,700 entries, including sub-lists in English, French and Spanish. This distribution list is not updated regularly by the Population Division. In October 2000, the Division was requested by the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services to do so, but this had not been done at 31 January 2001.

58. Prior to 1999, in addition to the addresses on the official list, each section maintained its own mailing list based on personal and professional contacts. During the past year these separate lists were consolidated into one mailing list, which now includes approximately 700 entries. The Population Information Network (POPIN) Worldwide Directory of Population Institutions contains approximately 1,500 addresses.

59. The Central Evaluation Unit was informed that, over the past year, the Population Division had been unable to maintain its stock of dated publications, owing to lack of storage space. The stocks ordered for free distribution by the Division are in excess of the number of addresses on the Division mailing list. Storage space for stocking publications remains in short supply, especially after the consolidation of the Division from the nineteenth and twentieth floors to the nineteenth floor only. As a consequence, some of the stock was discarded. Better planning in requesting stocks for free distribution by the Division so that they are proportional to the number of users on the mailing list would reduce wasteful disposal of publications' stocks in the future.

2. Use of the Internet

60. Between October 1993 and March 2000, summaries of many of the Population Division's publications (and sometimes the publications themselves) were made available on the Division's POPIN web site (www.undp.org/popin), in the section entitled "World Population Trends". Since 1993, POPIN has also included statements and documents from the International Conference on Population and Development, the special session of the General Assembly and the Commission on Population and Development. With the establishment of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, all documents for functional commissions were to be placed in a standard format within the departmental web site. The Population Division established its own separate web site (www.un.org/esa/population/unpop.htm) in early 2000, according to the prescribed Department of Economic and Social Affairs layout, and is in the process of putting its publications on it.

3. Population Information Network

61. The POPIN mandate derives from Economic and Social Council resolutions 2052 (LXII) of 5 May 1977 and 1979/33 of 9 May 1979. The Population Division and UNFPA initiated the POPIN project in 1981, with financial support from UNFPA. Its objectives are to identify, establish, strengthen and coordinate population information activities at the international, regional and national levels; to facilitate and enhance the availability of population information in collaboration with the regional commissions, the specialized agencies and the NGO population community; and to provide a forum for the exchange of experiences among developed and developing countries on population information issues. Another objective is to ensure access to population information and data in order to provide information support at all levels for the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development.

62. Several Commission bureau members praised the work of POPIN in raising awareness about population issues. The early and innovative use of the Internet by POPIN is now commonly accepted as a model for information dissemination and communication in the field of population and development. Interest in the POPIN web site was shown by the seven million accesses of the global and regional POPIN web sites from 115 countries during 2000. In 2000 the global POPIN web site had more than 4,500 links to the web site from other web sites worldwide.

63. The visibility and quality of its services is reflected in Internet awards received by POPIN since 1994. From 1994 to 2001, POPIN received eight awards for excellence (by Magellan, Dow Jones Business Directory, Study Web, Links2Go, Britannica.com, ISI, Changemakers.net and Scout Report) and has been selected for inclusion in other electronic libraries. The POPIN Advisory/Coordinating Committee, chaired by the Director of the Population Division, and which includes representatives from the United Nations regional commissions, UNFPA, foundations and the technology industry, at a meeting in December 1997 commended the Global POPIN

Coordinating Unit and recommended that POPIN should expand its activities through the regional commissions and the United Nations agencies, the UNFPA field structures, and partnerships with other institutions, including non-governmental organizations. This recommendation was implemented during 1998 and 1999.

64. The Population Division's POPIN project received support from UNFPA during the 1990s. At the beginning of 1999, UNFPA informed the Division that it could no longer support the programme from its core funds and that alternative sources of funds should be sought. At present, the Division and UNFPA are working together to explore possible sources of funding, both from regular budgetary as well as extrabudgetary sources. At the same time, further cost saving measures for the project are being introduced. For example, some secretarial services are being provided from current regular budget funds and several data sets hosted externally are in the process of being placed on United Nations servers.

E. Coordination

65. Coordination among agencies takes place through biennial meetings of the Administrative Committee on Coordination Subcommittee on Demographic Estimates and Projections and the Working Group on International Migration of the Administrative Committee on Coordination Task Force on Basic Social Services for All, in particular, the working groups on reproductive health and family services, and international migration. The Population Division has actively participated in the Subcommittee and the Task Force. Responses to a survey by the Central Evaluation Unit from agencies that are represented on these committees indicated that there was general satisfaction with the manner in which they functioned. One respondent stated "The Administrative Committee on Coordination meetings offer an excellent mechanism for communication but are insufficient to ensure collaboration on an ongoing basis. More informal, substantive input by agencies is needed, e.g., through participation in seminars and expert groups in their technical capacity". Noting that the Administrative Committee on Coordination meetings offered opportunities for contacts with intergovernmental agencies with observer status, such as the Statistical Office of the European Union (EUROSTAT) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), one respondent recommended "greater coordination" with those agencies. Another respondent stated that "these meetings are effective. Sharing updated estimates and projections for countries on a regular basis through e-mail, before the estimates are finalized in two or three year cycles, would also be useful".

66. For staff dealing with population issues in the five regional commissions, the major opportunity to discuss their activities with staff in the Population Division, the other regional commissions and the specialized agencies is at the annual session of the Commission on Population and Development. The Director of the Division regularly holds a meeting prior to the session to provide an opportunity for an exchange of views. With the exception of ECA, which considered that there was a need for enhanced coordination with the Division, there is satisfaction with the level of coordination and collaboration.

67. While coordination at the level of the Administrative Committee on Coordination would appear to be generally effective, there could be more ongoing collaboration between sessions through participation in seminars and expert group meetings. Furthermore, as was mentioned in paragraph 5 above, the Commission on Population and Development could fulfil more of a coordinating function if, as part of its documentation, it received an integrated presentation on all the population activities of the United Nations system.

F. Technical cooperation

68. Until 1994, technical cooperation for population activities was the responsibility of the former Population Projects and Programme Branch of the Department of Technical Cooperation for Development. In 1994, as a result of a reorganization, those activities were transferred from the Department to the Population Division, where they were the responsibility of a small group of staff funded by UNFPA. These funds were phased out during the biennium 1998-1999.

69. During the past two years, the Population Division, with funding from section 21 of the regular budget and from the development account, has provided assistance in the use of the Internet for

population networking. As of February 2001, three projects had been carried out, and were continuing, among selected developing countries of Western Africa (since October 1999) and of Asia (since December 2000). Projects in other regions are being planned for 2001. These technical cooperation projects assist population centres to develop networks and online discussion groups to support interactive research efforts.

G. Managerial issues

70. In November 2000, the Central Monitoring and Inspection Unit of OIOS conducted an inspection of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (A/55/750). A number of questions concerning staff and management issues were raised during the inspection, and subsequently discussed at a meeting between OIOS and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. OIOS will keep these issues under review.

H. Gender mainstreaming

71. In accordance with established demographic practice, the Population Division has consistently disaggregated and interpreted its data on projections and demographic variables by sex. The only exception to this practice is the urban projections. Furthermore, the Division has incorporated a gender mainstreaming approach in its special studies, for example, *Too Young to Die: Gene or Gender*, 1998, and *International Migration Policies and the Status of Female Migrants*, 1995. The 2000 *World Population Monitoring* report was devoted to population, gender and development. Furthermore, by its very nature, the work of the Fertility and Family Planning Section is centred on women. In connection with its work on fertility, the Division has analysed the educational and occupational differentials between men and women and their impact on fertility.

IV. Work on population by the regional commissions

72. Given time constraints, the Central Evaluation Unit was able to visit only ECLAC. The other four regional commissions were requested to respond to a questionnaire. Whenever necessary follow-up interviews by email and telephone were conducted.

A. Views of Bureau members of the Commission on Population and Development

73. Six respondents gave a positive rating regarding their respective regional commission's impact at the national level in the following areas: follow up to the International Conference on Population and Development; analysis of the relationship between population and socio-economic factors; and identification of emerging issues. Five respondents gave a positive rating with respect to capacity-building. The following suggestions were offered with respect to certain aspects of the work of the regional commissions: increase regional research; increase funding for comparative research; offer more training in demographic analysis and census research and population projections techniques; pursue more advocacy.

B. Economic Commission for Africa

74. The ECA population programme is carried out by its Food Security and Sustainable Development Division, which was established in 1998 as part of a merger of the former Population, Agriculture and Natural Resources Divisions. In response to the Central Evaluation Unit questionnaire to the regional commissions, ECA reported that the restructuring had weakened the already understaffed population programme in terms of both staff and activities. Half of the ECA population experts had been transferred to the subregional centres and some recurrent and non-recurrent publications had been discontinued (for example, the *African Population Newsletter* and the *African Population Studies* series) and replaced by publications focusing on food security, population-planning policies and environment sustainability. ECA, however, reported that the restructuring had had a positive effect in that it promoted the adoption of a broader view of population in the context of sustainable development in line with the International Conference on Population and Development.

75. The programme of work of the Food Security and Sustainable Development Division includes the

following population related activities: substantive servicing of meetings of the Follow-up Committee on the Implementation of the Dakar/Ngor Declaration and Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development; outreach/networking through recurrent and non-recurrent publications, and dissemination of this information through an electronic web site; advocacy work through dissemination of the population, environment, development and agriculture model, which explores nexus relationships between these four variables. During 2000, the Division worked towards further developing the model and preparing a technical manual and a user's manual to accompany the distribution of the software. In December 2000, ECA organized workshops focused on the population, environment, development and agriculture model for policy makers and researchers at the subregional development centres. ECA expects that model will be used and customized by researchers, universities and policy makers in specific countries.

76. As part of the UNFPA-supported technical assistance programme, ECA advisers are involved in providing advisory services to African countries in cartography, census-taking, demographic data processing and analysis. In collaboration with the Global POPIN Coordinating Unit, the Division has developed a POPIN-Africa web site (www.un.org/Depts/eca/divis/fssd/popin) and two other web sites that are used to disseminate the following information: follow up to Dakar/Ngor Declaration and the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action, the population, environment, development and agriculture model, and the *Africa's Population and Development Bulletin*.

77. Participants at meetings and expert group workshops are required to assess various aspects of the meetings and to provide suggestions for improvement and to comment on benefits. The Food Security and Sustainable Development Division reported that the overall evaluation of these meetings has been "fairly positive". With respect to the population, environment, development and agriculture model, its structure and assumptions have been tested extensively by African and international scientists and professionals. It has been applied to nine countries and now includes an HIV/AIDS component that shows its impact on the other variables in the model. The Division has received positive feedback from readers of the *Africa's Population and Development Bulletin*, which is distributed in both French and English.

78. ECA perceived a need for the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to become more involved in activities of the Food Security and Sustainable Development Division and for enhanced coordination particularly when the interregional adviser is planning and implementing activities in the Africa region (for example, training, networking, field projects, etc.).

C. Economic Commission for Europe

79. In ECE, demographic work is carried out by the Population Activities Unit, located within the Economic Analysis Division. The new reporting arrangement, to the Conference on European Statisticians, adopted in 1998, has resulted in greater intergovernmental support for ECE work in population.

80. The activities of the Population Activities Unit include: (a) population research and analysis; (b) technical assistance; and (c) substantive servicing of meetings. From 1992 to the present, with funding from UNFPA and the United States National Institute on Aging, projects were implemented on international migration, fertility and family surveys, dynamics of population ageing in the ECE region. With respect to substantive servicing, ECE co-organized, with the Council of Europe and UNFPA, the 1993 European Population Conference. It also co-organized the 1998 Regional Population Meeting (Budapest 1998), which was a regional follow-up of the 1993 and 1994 conferences. The UNFPA-assisted projects of the 1990s resulted in two major conferences, the Conference on the Status of the Older Population: Prelude to the Twenty-first Century (1999) and Fertility and Family Survey's Flagship Conference: Partnership and Fertility (2000) and generated approximately 40 publications. The Population Activities Unit reported that the reduction in UNFPA funds had resulted in the discontinuation in the mid-1990s of its work on international migration, which focused mostly on countries with economies in transition. Fundraising efforts designed to offset the decline in UNFPA support focused on the European Commission and several Member States have not yet yielded results.

81. With some UNFPA support, ECE is currently implementing a project entitled "Generations and

Gender: Research into their Behaviour and Quality of Life", which will seek answers to fundamental questions of European demographic conditions such as why sub-replacement fertility has become the norm in Europe. In consultation with experts, NGOs and intergovernmental organizations, the Population Activities Unit is preparing for the forthcoming ECE ministerial Conference on Ageing (Berlin, 2002).

82. Representatives of the Population Activities Unit take part in expert meetings of the Population Division; the Unit is an occasional user of the estimates and projections of the Division. Members of the Division are invited to participate in the Unit's seminars and conferences.

83. In the course of the present evaluation, the Central Evaluation Unit reviewed two external assessments of UNFPA-assisted projects executed by the Population Activities Unit: the report of the UNFPA/ECE evaluation mission of three UNFPA-assisted projects of the Population Activities Unit of the United Nations/ECE, January 1996, and the mid-term review of four UNFPA-assisted projects of the Population Activities Unit, May 1998. The latter evaluation found that the "programme strategy was sound"; "the projects are on the whole well designed" and "address country needs in a pertinent manner and are well appreciated"; "projects benefited greatly from advisory groups and the advice of country participants and leading specialists"; "country interest in the projects is strong, particularly in countries in transition"; and projects "are conceived to benefit in the best possible way from the ECE's unique position in the region".

D. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

84. The Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE) was established in 1957 by the United Nations as a project to provide the countries of the region with technical assistance in the study of their populations and to train national professionals to carry out work in the field of population. In 1975, CELADE was incorporated into ECLAC as a permanent institution with its own identity and given the responsibility of executing the Latin American and Caribbean regional population programme of ECLAC. The process of integration was completed in 1998 when CELADE became the ECLAC Population Division but kept its previous acronym.

85. In the work programme of CELADE for the period 1998-2001, activities were reformulated to reflect the issues and priorities highlighted in the 1996 Latin American and Caribbean Plan of Action (LC/DEM/G.159). The objectives of CELADE included: (a) improving the capacity of countries to incorporate population variables into social policies; (b) supporting the Governments of the region in their efforts to implement the Latin American and Caribbean regional plan of action on population and development; (c) promoting the simultaneous use of sectoral and demographic information through modern software technologies; (d) assisting Member States in designing, monitoring and evaluating suitable environmental and spatial projects, programmes and policies; and (e) helping to develop a system for analysing the determining factors and implications of new migratory patterns as well as their relationship with the trend towards globalization of the economy.[30]

86. During 1999, CELADE worked closely with national statistical offices and other relevant institutions to monitor fertility, mortality and migration trends in the region and produce new estimates and projections. A number of countries requested CELADE technical assistance in preparing themselves for the 2000 round of censuses. In 1998, in response to a request by the presiding officers of the sessional ad hoc committee on population and development of ECLAC in 1998 (LC/DEM/G.185, annex III), CELADE, after reviewing indicators proposed by UNFPA, WHO and the Latin American and Caribbean Women's Health Network, issued a discussion paper including a set of indicators.

87. In relation to improving capacity-building and integrating demographic variables into social policies, the strategy of CELADE was to maximize the use of census data and other sources of information for planning social projects at the subregional and local level. Another approach was to promote the use of the Retrieval of Data for Small Areas by Microcomputers (REDATAM), a specialized, user-friendly, software package developed by CELADE that can enhance decision-making capacity for the allocation of resources for social programmes and projects (the fourth generation of this software is scheduled for release in May 2001). An ECLAC self-evaluation report for the biennium 1998-1999 stated that the

"REDATAM family of software continues to have an important impact on the use of population census and related data by a large number of national and local institutions in the region" and that information on REDATAM is made available on the CELADE web site (www.eclac.org/celade).

88. The Division's research activities focused on the following issues: ageing of the population, the relationship between reproductive health and poverty, international migration and linkages between population and youth. The Latin American and Caribbean review and appraisal report on the implementation of the International Conference on Population and Development, issued in 1999 (LC/DEM/G.184, pp. 11-21), found that there was progress in many countries of the ECLAC region in developing a legislative and institutional framework for achieving the goals of the Conference for reproductive health and reproductive rights.

89. In September 2000, CELADE, in collaboration with IOM, organized a symposium on international migration in the Americas, which provided an opportunity for government experts, specialists on migration and representatives of civil society organizations and international agencies to share their knowledge and experience. CELADE has upgraded and maintained its database on the International Migration in Latin America, which shows the county of birth of Latin Americans who have been counted in censuses in other countries, both within and outside the region.

90. The CELADE dissemination strategy is oriented towards free distribution of its print publications. The CELADE web site, established in 1997, is also used for disseminating population data and other information to primary and secondary users. Besides the *Demographic Bulletin*, which is regularly updated, other tables, databases and non-recurrent publications and symposium reports are also posted on the site. ECLAC reported that collaboration with the Global POPIN Coordinating Unit had enabled CELADE to move beyond the static mail-based Latin American and Caribbean Population Documentation System, established in 1976, to the use of the Internet to provide online searches of the System's database and direct access to CELADE publications, seminars and software. According to a CELADE self-evaluation report, from November 1998 to October 1999, the total number of accesses per month more than quadrupled, from 2,192 to 9,192. The most accessed pages of the CELADE web site are the recent issues of the *Demographic Bulletin*. The site was redesigned in early 1998 to facilitate navigation and linkages to other institutions. In late 2000, technical changes were made to the site to introduce value-added features and services and to expedite updating the site.

91. A search of the Population Index for the period 1994 to 2000 found 32 citations for CELADE as author. Compared with the total number of citations for the United Nations as author, CELADE ranks second after the Population Division, with 19 per cent of the total.

92. Curtailment of UNFPA funds had a negative effect on CELADE activities in demographic training. In 1996, the UNFPA-sponsored global training programme, a nine-month long course, was transferred to the University of Chile. Collaboration by CELADE with this programme ended in 1999. During the period under consideration, CELADE was also involved in teaching intensive four-month regional courses in demographic analysis. However, curtailment of funds prevented CELADE from offering fellowships, and the number of participants who were able to secure their own funding has gradually declined. The future of this intensive training is in doubt. Greater attention is now being given to more focused training activities on REDATAM software packages and shorter courses lasting several days.

93. In the course of the evaluation, the Central Evaluation Unit examined an evaluation of UNFPA projects executed by CELADE contained in the final report on the evaluation of the UNFPA-CELADE regional project, 1992-1995, issued in July 1995. The major findings were that: (a) CELADE had "an internationally recognized capability for assisting the countries of the ECLAC region in population data collection and demographic analysis"; (b) CELADE had "an institutional capacity for developing innovative software for census and survey processing methodology and demographic analysis"; (c) data gathered and studies completed had "contributed to the greater understanding of the nexus between demographic processes and poverty"; (d) CELADE had a "training capacity to sensitize public sector personnel, update demographers on latest methods and research techniques, and improve the technical level of demographic analysis"; and (e) in its document collection and dissemination strategy, CELADE had "responded well to the changing technological

environment and been able to take advantage of the emerging technology". In particular, the evaluation found that the two semi-annual publications, *Demographic Bulletin* and *Notas de Poblacion* had been effective in "creating awareness" of emerging issues in population and development.

94. According to the 1995 UNFPA evaluation, CELADE had actively collaborated with other ECLAC units, particularly the Social Development Division and the Environment and Human Settlement Division. The staff of CELADE expressed satisfaction with the level of collaboration between CELADE and the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and noted that ECLAC was the only regional commission whose estimates and projections on the countries of the region were directly used by the Population Division. The positive aspects of collaboration with the Global POPIN Coordinating Unit received special mention (see para. 90 above). There was concern that the previously good collaboration established with the UNFPA country technical services team, which had been located in Santiago, would be negatively affected by the office's recent transfer to Mexico City. On the other hand, communication and collaboration with other regional commissions could be improved. For example, staff in CELADE were not familiar with the population, environment, development and agriculture model developed by ECA (see para. 75 above), which, unlike the data processing system REDATAM, is an advocacy modelling tool. Similarly, the staff in ESCWA was not familiar with the REDATAM software.

95. Owing to a realignment of UNFPA priorities since 1994 in favour of Africa and Asia, extrabudgetary resources have declined. Concern was expressed that CELADE would no longer be able to fulfil the needs of the region in an area where it had acquired a unique expertise. There are only six regular budget Professional posts. As a result, the regular staff is stretched very thinly over many tasks and projects. Staff members from another division expressed concern to the Central Evaluation Unit that the capacity of CELADE to analyse its census databases had declined as a result of staffing cuts. The resource gap is being addressed by recruiting consultants, with extrabudgetary funds.

E. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

96. As a result of the restructuring of the conference and programme structures mandated by the Commission in 1997, the work programme on population has been merged with the work programme related to rural and urban development. In 1998, the Population Division established in 1969 was merged with the Rural and Urban Development Sections to become the Population and Rural and Urban Development Division. Population-related matters were also addressed under other work programme areas, such as statistics, which continued to deal with various aspects of population statistics and social development that were concerned with integrated approaches to youth health, focusing on reproductive health and substance abuse and HIV/AIDS prevention.

97. During the period under review, specific population activities included: (a) the provision of technical assistance and advisory services for the purpose of national capacity-building; (b) substantive servicing of meetings where population issues were discussed at the annual session of the ESCAP Commission, in various thematic committees and in inter-organizational subcommittees; (c) the dissemination of population data and information through recurrent publications (such as the quarterly *Asia-Pacific Population Journal* and *Population Headliners*) and non-recurrent publications and meetings; (d) collaborative research, such as monitoring and evaluation systems for measuring progress in reproductive health and family planning programmes; and (e) the development of information through the promotion of information technology applications, such as database development and the use of the Internet, and coordination of the Asia-Pacific Population Information Network (Asia-Pacific POPIN). Beginning in the biennium 2000-2001, ESCAP shifted its emphasis from the production of technical publications to the provision of technical assistance and training activities aimed at strengthening national capacities, in response to the Commission's mandate.

98. In the course of the evaluation, the Central Evaluation Unit examined the following assessments of the ESCAP population programme: (a) an external assessment of the population information project funded by UNFPA for the period 1992-1995, dated September 1995; (b) an internal UNFPA desk review of

its regional programme, 1996-1999; (c) an external evaluation by a team of consultants of the ESCAP Asia-Pacific population programme funded by UNFPA during the period 1996-1998, dated March 1999; and (d) 1997 internal readership surveys of recurrent publications.

99. The March 1999 external evaluation found that the meetings organized by the Population Division to promote the application of new technology in population data collection, processing, dissemination and presentation, "provided an excellent opportunity for interaction with specialists from several advanced countries" and in "developing understanding about imaging technology". The evaluation team recommended that "advanced information technology such as the Internet, CD-ROMs and multimedia be utilized as much as possible and that efforts be made to improve national capacity in this regard".

100. The evaluation also found that two recurrent publications, the *Asia-Pacific Population Journal* and *Population Headliners*, were "generally valued for purposes ranging from policy formulation and programme implementation to research, teaching, general information and advocacy". The evaluators recommended that the *Asia-Pacific Population Journal* include shorter articles and that *Population Headliners* be aimed at a higher-level target audience. The 1997 internal readership surveys also provided the Population and Rural and Urban Development Division with feedback on the usefulness and quality of its publications. For example, a high percentage of respondents rated the *Asia-Pacific Population Journal* as "excellent" or "good" and "strongly agreed that the journal was a timely professional journal of high quality". While coverage was considered good, there were suggestions that it should include more articles encouraging support of international assistance of population programmes in the region. ESCAP reported that it had followed up and implemented most of the external evaluators' recommendations and those included in the readership surveys.

101. The Division streamlined its web site home page (www.unescap.org/pop) during 1999; it now includes population databases, the full text of the *Asia-Pacific Population Journal*, as well as other population publications. The Division collects web statistics on a monthly basis to monitor users' interest in its web site. Based on web statistics provided by ESCAP for the period from January to October 2000, the population site overtook the ESCAP Statistics site as the most frequently visited site, receiving on average 26.7 per cent of all traffic to ESCAP. In addition, the Division coordinates the activities of the Asia-Pacific POPIN, a decentralized network involving regional, subregional, national and non-governmental population information centres in the ESCAP region.

102. ESCAP considers that collaboration between itself and the Population Division and UNFPA is working reasonably well, but that collaboration with other agencies of the United Nations system needs to be improved.

F. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

103. Since 1994, ESCWA population activities have been conducted by the Population Section in the Social Development Issues and Policies Division. The Population Section is responsible for the following activities: (a) providing substantive services to intergovernmental bodies, such as the Committee on Social Development, which meets biannually, and the Arab Conference on the Implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, held at Beirut in 1998; (b) monitoring population trends and levels and preparing biennial estimates, which are included in the demographic and related socio-economic data sheets for the countries of the ESCWA region; (c) monitoring population policies in the countries of the region and to that end maintaining and developing a UNFPA supported population policy information system and conducting research of selected population topics pertinent to the region (such as organizing an expert group meeting on international migration and population policies in the ESCWA region in 1999); and (d) conducting outreach and disseminating information through recurrent and non-recurrent publications, such as the *Population Bulletin of ESCWA*, an annual journal concerned with population and related issues including theoretical and methodological issues relevant to population training.

104. The division of labour between the ESCWA Statistics Division and the ESCWA Population Section mirrors that found at Headquarters. The Statistics Division is responsible for collecting demographic statistical data, which are compiled in the following annual publications: *Bulletin on the Vital Statistics in*

the ESCWA region and *Statistical Abstract of the ESCWA region.*

105. ESCWA dissemination strategy is oriented towards print publications. There are two mailing lists, one maintained centrally by ESCWA and another maintained by the Population Section, which includes some 350 addressees interested in ESCWA population issues. The section's publications are not posted in the ESCWA web site. Owing to a shortage of funds, the Global POPIN Coordinating Unit was not able to assist ESCWA in establishing a POPIN web site. However, the process of establishing a POPIN web site began in 2001 (see www.undp.org/popin/regional/escwa/index.htm). ESCWA staff were not aware of the software developed by CELADE and of the population, environment, development and agriculture (PEDA) computer model developed by ECA.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

106. The work of the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs is an important part of the world professional discussion on demographic issues. The value of the Division's reports and publications as reference work, as well as their comprehensiveness, and technical quality, is well recognized. A number of sources suggested the quality and usefulness of the Division's publications could be enhanced by including more elaborate clarifications of methodology and assumptions, and more extensive interpretation and analysis of emerging issues. While there is evidence of collaboration within the Division in preparing some outputs, such as the *World Population Monitoring* report, more reliance on interdisciplinary approaches and task forces and greater collaboration with other units within the Department of Economic and Social Affairs is needed to further improve the quality of the assumptions underlying projections and to enhance understanding of the interrelationship between population and development.

107. The Population Division has made a significant contribution to the understanding of international migration through *World Population Monitoring: International Migration and Development* and the report on replacement migration.

108. The Population Information Network (POPIN), with more than seven million hits of the global and regional POPIN web sites during the past year, and more than 4,500 links from other web sites worldwide, has been a notable success. The Population Division's plans on ways to support the existing activities of POPIN beyond June 2001, when the UNFPA funding ends, are not entirely clear at this point.

109. In line with established demographic practice, the Population Division has mainstreamed gender in its presentation and analysis of demographic data; urban projections, however, are not disaggregated by sex.

110. With respect to the dissemination of worldwide population information, the effectiveness of the Population Division is shown by such indicators as professional reviews of its publications, media references to the United Nations in stories on demographic issues, and citations of the Division's publications in specialized indexes. However, the Division's dissemination strategy should better reflect the growing interest of users in accessing information and databases through the Internet, while at the same time protecting the commercial interest of the United Nations in publications with significant revenue potential. The Division's strategy should also recognize the need for distribution of low-cost print publications to users in countries that still lack access to the Internet.

111. In the regional commissions, as a result of various restructuring efforts, population activities have been merged into broader programmes in all the commissions except ECLAC. While some regional commissions have reported mixed results on the effects of the restructuring of population activities, the Central Evaluation Unit is not yet in a position to assess what the net effect of these structural changes have been. All regional commissions would benefit from a more extensive exchange of information on the latest developments in computer modelling and software.

112. Over the past two bienniums, the Population Division and all the regional commissions have experienced a significant decline in extrabudgetary resources for population activities, to the point where successful programmes are jeopardized. The Division and the regional commissions should actively explore new sources of extrabudgetary funding, such as foundations and Member States.

113. Currently, there is no integrated presentation on population activities to the Commission on Population and Development. However, a possible future agreement among agencies of the United Nations

system to participate in such an integrated presentation would enhance information sharing and coordination and identify opportunities for joint activities, complementarity and collaboration. The following recommendations are based on the findings presented in sections II, III and IV of the report.

Recommendation 1
Improving the coverage of information on population activities presented to the Commission on Population and Development

The Commission on Population and Development may consider the need for an overview report and decide on its nature, scope and periodicity, as well as on arrangements for the preparation of such a report based on a proposal to be prepared by the Population Division, after consultation with UNFPA, the regional commissions, specialized agencies and funds, IOM and NGOs (see paras. 5 and 113 above).

Recommendation 2
Enhancing the quality and usefulness of the Division's output

In future publications, the Population Division should provide clear statements on the methodology and assumptions underlying its estimates and projections, and provide more interpretation of results, including identification of emerging issues in a less technical, more user-friendly format (see paras. 25, 30, 34, 43, 47 and 48 above).

Recommendation 3
Print publications on population

United Nations print publications on population should consist of:

(a) Publications that are issued as sales publications as a matter of record or for other non-commercial reasons, for which print runs should continue to be small. The same information can be issued additionally in mimeograph or similar inexpensive print or machine-readable forms and distributed free of charge. The information contained in these print publications should also be disseminated through POPIN and posted on the Division web site (see paras. 27, 29, 56 and 60 above).

(b) Publications that are of potential commercial significance should be financed, produced, advertised and sold so as to maximize sales revenues, with online information made available in a manner that protects the United Nations commercial interest in those publications. For these, advertising, book launches and other publicity events should be organized (see para. 56 above).

(c) Not-for-sale publications, which should be distributed free in an inexpensive print form and posted on the POPIN and Division web sites (see paras. 27, 29 and 43 above).

Recommendation 4
Future of the Population Information Network

(a) Given the value of POPIN and the Global POPIN Coordinating Unit, the Population Division should, in collaboration with UNFPA, energetically seek both regular and extrabudgetary funds to ensure the continuation of existing POPIN activities (see paras. 60-64 above).

(b) Decisions affecting the future status, scope and direction of POPIN work programme, and its relation to the work programme of the Division, should be addressed to the POPIN Advisory/Coordinating Committee, which includes representation from the primary donor and the regional commissions (see paras. 63 and 64 above).

(c) Population information generated in ESCWA should be posted on its POPIN web site as soon as possible (see para. 105 above).

Recommendation 5
Funding

The Population Division should submit research proposals for consideration to UNFPA, Foundations and other donors in the areas of fertility and reproductive health, ageing, international migration and population and development (see paras. 3, 14, 18, 25 and 43 above).

Recommendation 6
Interdisciplinary approaches to population issues

In order to improve further the quality of estimates and projections, to enhance

understanding of the interrelationships between population and development and to promote substantive linkages among the various sections, the Population Division should develop task forces or joint projects and encourage interdisciplinary approaches to foster collaboration between the Division and other units within the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and other programmes and agencies, including collaboration on technical assistance (see paras. 3, 25, 43, 46, 48 and 49 above).

Recommendation 7
Assessment of restructuring in the regional commissions

The triennial review of the population programme should include an assessment of the restructuring of population activities in the regional commissions (see para. 111 above).

Recommendation 8
More active exchange of experience

There should be more active exchange of experience among staff in the regional commissions dealing with population issues. While some information is available on the respective regional commission web sites, demonstrations of the various products (such as REDATAM software from ECLAC, the PEDA model in ECA, and indicators of achievements of the goals of the International Conference on Population and Development) could be scheduled to coincide with the annual session of the Commission on Population and Development (see paras. 5, 66, 87 and 105 above).

Recommendation 9
Gender mainstreaming

Resources permitting, the urban projections of the Population Division should be disaggregated by sex and age (see paras. 8 (c), 30 and 71 on gender mainstreaming).

Recommendation 10
Extrabudgetary funding for population activities of the regional commissions

In view of the general decline in UNFPA funding, the regional commissions should actively solicit funds for population related research and capacity-building (see paras. 19, 73, 80, 92 and 112 above).

Recommendation 11
Review by the Commission on Population and Development

The present report, and the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Coordination thereon, should be submitted to the Commission at its meeting in 2002, bearing in mind that the Commission, at its meeting in 2004, will review and appraise its work and that of the Secretariat.

(*Signed*) Dileep **Nair**
Under-Secretary-General for
Internal Oversight Services

Notes

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 16* (A/53/16), para. 220.

[2] *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution1, annex.

[3] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council 1995, Supplement No. 7* (E/1995/27, annex I, para 7).

[4] *Official Records of the General Assembly Fifty-fifth session, Supplement No. 6* (A/55/6/Rev.1), programme 7, subprogramme 6.

[5] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.98.XIII.4.

[6] "World Population Monitoring 1977", *Population and Development Review*, vol. 25, No. 1, March 1999, pp. 187 and 188.

[7] United Nations publication, Sales No. 95.XIII.10.

[8] V. Schwartz, "International Migration Policies and the Status of Female Migrants", *Journal of Government Information*, vol. 22, No. 5-6, September/December 1996, pp. 732-734.

[9] *L'Evenement*, 9 June 2000.

[10] Allison Tarmann, "The flap over replacement migration", *Population Today*, vol. 28, No. 4, May-June 2000, pp. 1-2.

[11] Commission of the European Communities, "Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on a Community immigration policy" (COM/2000/0757), 22 November 2000.

[12] United Nations publication E.98.XIII.13.

[13] T. Le Grand, "Too Young to Die"; *Cahiers Quebecois de Demographie*, Fall issue, 2000.

[14] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.XIII.11.

[15] "AIDS and Demography of Africa", *Population and Development Review*, vol. 21, March 1995, pp. 185-186.

[16] National Academy Press, Washington, D.C.

[17] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.99.XIII.8.

[18] G. McNicoll, "World Population Prospects; the 1998 revision", *Population and Development Review*, vol. 25, issue 4, December 1999, p. 819.

[19] Nico Keilman, "How accurate are the United Nations world projections?", *Population and Development Review*, vol. 24, Supplement 1998, pp. 36-37.

[20] Bernardo Columbo, Paul Demeny and Max Perutz, eds., *Resources and Population, Natural, Institutional and Dimensions of Development*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1996, p. 306.

[21] Carl Haub, "United Nations projections assume fertility decline, mortality increase", *Population Today*, vol. 26, No. 12, December 1998, pp. 1-2.

[22] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.98.XIII.6.

[23] "World Urbanization Prospects: the 1996 revisions", *Population and Development Review*, vol. 24, No. 4, December 1998, pp. 883-884.

[24] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.XIII.4.

[25] "The challenge of urbanization, the world's large cities", *Population and Development Review*, vol. 22, No. 3, September 1996, p. 587.

[26] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.99.XIII.3.

[27] L. Schankman, "National Population Policies", *Choice*, vol. 37, issue 2, October 1999, p. 315.

[28] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.XIII.7.

[29] Jeffrey Jordan, "Population, Environment and Development: Proceedings of the United Nations Expert Group Meeting on Population, Environment and Development, New York, 1992", *Society and Natural Resources*, vol. 9, No. 5, 1996, pp. 556-557.

[30] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 6* (A/53/6/Rev.1), subprogramme 17.8.